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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [ETTC](#) [RS](#) [SY](#) [SU](#) [IR](#)
SUBJECT: FOLLOW-UP DEMARCHE TO RUSSIA ON ARMS COOPERATION
WITH SYRIA, SUDAN, AND IRAN

REF: A. MOSCOW 977
[1](#)B. STATE 26466

Classified By: Minister-Counselor for Political Affairs Alice Wells. Reasons 1.4 (B/D).

[1](#)1. (S) Sergey Petlyakov, Director of the Foreign Ministry's Arms Technology and Transfer Policy Section in the Department for Disarmament and Security Affairs, told us March 9 that he would raise Ref B information within the GOR's interagency community and get back to us on Russian arms cooperation with Syria, Sudan, and Iran if anything substantive surfaced. He would also coordinate with North America Department Director Neverov (Ref A). Petlyakov reiterated the GOR position that neither Russian assistance to Syria for overhauling aircraft nor the transfer of Russian anti-tank guided missiles (ATGMs) violated current UN sanctions or other international legal obligations. From Russia's perspective, such transactions were legal and did not undermine regional security.

[1](#)2. (S) Petlyakov responded to our concern about reports that ATGMs were continuing to find their way to Hizballah by noting that Moscow had tightened up its end-user checks on such transfers and did not have any evidence of diversion. He reiterated that he would get back to us if the GOR interagency developed any information to the contrary.

[1](#)3. (S) On reports of negotiations between Tehran and the Sukhoy Experimental Design Bureau to upgrade Iranian combat aircraft, Petlyakov replied that he was unaware of such discussions. Moscow, the US, and other major powers were continuing to cooperate closely on Iran. This, along with the GOR's positive reaction to the US decision to terminate sanctions against Sukhoy in November, made it unlikely that Sukhoy would engage in something so "stupid" now. Petlyakov added that Russia was well aware that current UN sanctions against Iran had grandfathered contracts approved prior to the imposition of those sanctions. Moscow intended to follow through on previously negotiated contracts (he pointed to the delivery of the Tor-M1 missile system to Iran last December) but would respect current and future UN sanction regimes.

[1](#)4. (S) In response to our concerns about lethal military equipment being used by the Sudanese military in Darfur, Petlyakov said he was not aware that any Russian arms or spare parts had been used in Darfur for at least the past year. He said Russia did not simply "sell and forget" about weapons systems transferred to other countries. Russian specialists continued to check on their end-use, including in Sudan, where they seek to ensure that Russian equipment was not deployed in Darfur or otherwise in violation of UN sanctions or international obligations. In response to our concerns that recently delivered Mi-171 helicopters not be used in Darfur, Petlyakov emphasized that Moscow would conduct proper end-use checks.

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